

# POWDER OVERCHARGE BLAMED FOR MISHAP IN CARBONADO MINE

Investigating Body An-  
nounces Results of  
Week's Inquiry

OLYMPIA, April 19.—(UP)—Overcharge of explosives, with two shots fired in rapid succession, caused the tragedy that cost the lives of seventeen miners in the Carbonado coal mine one week ago, according to the official report of William R. Reese, chief state mine inspector, filed today with the state department of labor and industries.

No negligence was revealed and responsibility was fixed upon the miners themselves. David J. Hughes, was foreman.

"Assisted in our investigation by most eminent coal miners, of the state, after due deliberation we were brought to the conclusion that the origin of the explosion was in No. 5 chute of the south gangway and the cause was firing two coal shots in the face of that chute.

"Furthermore, the men's bodies found after the explosion in the vicinity of No. 5 chute were all burned severely, while those in the pitch and on the north side of the mine did not show but little if any signs of scorching and undoubtedly were killed by "after damp" and the concussion of the blast," the report said.

## Two Shots

"The consensus of opinion of the mining experts and operators who visited the mine after the tragedy was that the explosion was caused by too heavy a charge of powder in

the first hole going off and creating a dusty atmosphere, while possibly a small quantity of gas liberated by the first round of shot added the element necessary to the propagation of combined gas and coal dust explosion, when the second shot went off, capable of the havoc wrought in the destruction of life and property in its path," the report said.

"The firing switch was located a little distance inside the No. 3 chute and Foreman Hughes evidently followed the usual practice, threw in the switch, as his body with more of the miners, was lying at the immediate vicinity of the firing switch.

#### Interval of Seconds

"Delay electric detonators were used, and when Hughes threw in the switch the interval between the explosions was several seconds, and as the charge of powder in the first hole, going off was greatly in excess of what was required, pulverized the coal into dust, charging the atmosphere with an element capable of wreaking havoc and destruction even had there been no gas present. It is not conceivable that Hughes failed to examine for gas before either charging or firing the holes, as all testimony of the witnesses examined declared him to be a most thoroughly careful foreman, particularly in the matter of gas and the handling of explosives."